

REMARKS

I. Formalities

Claims 1-9 and 11-27 remain in the subject patent application. Claim 10 is canceled herein. Claims 1-9 were withdrawn from consideration pursuant to a response, filed on August 27, 2004, to a restriction requirement mailed July 29, 2004. Claims 11-15, 17, and 19-22 are amended herein. Each of the claim amendments is limited to one or both of: (1) changing the claim dependency from one claim to another; and (2) rewriting a claim into independent form by incorporating into the newly independent claim the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added herein.

II. Remarks Directed to the Allowable Subject Matter

The allowance of claims 23-27 is noted with approval and thanks.

Claims 11, 13, and 15-19 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but the Office Action stated that the claims would be allowable if they were rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 11, 13, 15, and 19 have been rewritten into independent form as suggested by the Office Action, and are each therefore in condition for allowance. Claims 16-18 have been amended such that they now depend, directly or indirectly, from allowable claim 15. Claims 16-18 are therefore also in condition for allowance, based at least in part on their dependence from an allowable claim.

III. Remarks Directed to Claims 12, 14, and 20-22

Claims 12, 14, and 20-22 have each been amended herein such that they each now depend from claim 11, which was shown in Part II to be allowable. Accordingly, claims 12, 14, and 20-22 are allowable based at least in part on that dependence from an allowable claim.

IV. Remarks Regarding the References Made of Record and Not Relied Upon

Applicants respectfully submit that the references made of record but not relied upon neither show, disclose, teach, nor suggest the claimed invention.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. In light of the amendments and remarks set forth above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all of the pending claims.

All fees believed to be due in connection with this paper, as shown in the attached Fee Calculation Sheet, are submitted herewith. However, the Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees necessitated by this Response, or credit any overpayment, to Account No. 02-4467.

If there are matters that can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of this application, Applicants invite Examiner Smoot to call the undersigned attorney at the Examiner's convenience.

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Respectfully submitted,



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